United Nations A/HRC/39/12

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 July 2018

Original: English

Human Rights Council
Thirty-ninth session
10–28 September 2018
Agenda item 6
Universal periodic review

Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Bangladesh

* The annex is being circulated without formal editing, in the language of submission only.

GE.18-11472(E)
1811472

Please recycle

Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its thirtieth session from 7 to 18 May 2018. The review of Bangladesh was held at the 11th meeting, on 14 May 2018. The delegation of Bangladesh was headed by the Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Anisul Huq. At its 17th meeting, held on 17 May 2018, the Working Group adopted the report on Bangladesh.

2. On 10 January 2018, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Bangladesh: Afghanistan, Rwanda and Ukraine.

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Bangladesh:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/30/BGD/1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/30/BGD/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/30/BGD/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Liechtenstein, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay was transmitted to Bangladesh through the troika. These questions are available on the website of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The head of the delegation said that "all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights", referring to article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and stated that, regrettably, discrimination and human rights violations were still present in what some analysts were calling a post–human rights era. In such a global context, Bangladesh had opened its border for the forcibly displaced nationals of Myanmar.

6. He said that, despite constraints, the Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, had welcomed the Rohingya, whom he described as the most persecuted people in the world, who had been forced to flee from their homes in Myanmar. Bangladeshi people had embraced the 1.1 million helpless Rohingya, who, he said, had suffered the worst kind of human rights violations in Myanmar, and with support from the international community had provided basic services and temporary shelter. Humanitarian agencies had been given full access to Cox's Bazar, where the world's largest camp sheltered the Rohingya.

7. Bangladesh had made remarkable progress in terms of socioeconomic development, attaining record GDP growth of 7.5 per cent. The poverty rate had been brought down to 24.3 per cent in 2016, from 38.4 per cent in 2006. Life expectancy had increased to 72 years.

8. Bangladesh had met all three criteria for graduation from least developed country status, and believed that its inclusive development agenda, of leaving no one behind, was closely linked with its vision of ensuring human rights for all. The head of the delegation reported that, in the past five years, Bangladesh had made every possible effort to

implement the 191 recommendations accepted from the previous cycle, through a consultative process engaging the Government and civil society.

9. In the past four years, Bangladesh had submitted reports under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Bangladesh had also facilitated a visit by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief and two visits by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. Bangladesh had responded favourably to request for meetings from the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. Before entering into any further international obligations, Bangladesh needed to address capacity-building issues regarding its national institutions.

10. In the past five years, the National Human Rights Commission had been strengthened substantially. Furthermore, 50 parliamentary committees, including 39 standing committees and the Anti-Corruption Commission, were overseeing implementation of universal periodic review recommendations. The independent judiciary continued to play its due role as an effective recourse for justice.

11. Bangladesh maintained a "zero tolerance" policy regarding the criminal liability of law enforcement officials. The law in general neither accorded them immunity from criminal prosecution nor favoured them. Bangladesh unequivocally condemned all incidents of violence against religious and ethnic minorities and addressed allegations of such violence as promptly as possible.

12. To protect the rights of ethnic minorities, the Government had committed to implementing the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord in its entirety. The fifteenth amendment of the Constitution stipulated the State's responsibility to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribal and ethnic communities.

13. The democratic environment was thriving, with over 3,000 local and international non-government organizations currently operating in Bangladesh. Since the second review, 18 new television channels had been approved, bringing the total number to 34, and 2,800 newspapers were operating. Also, the Bangladesh Journalists' Welfare Trust Act 2014 had been enacted.

14. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index of 2017, Bangladesh had ranked forty-seventh out of 144 countries and first in South Asia. It had ranked seventh in the world for women's political empowerment. Through the seventeenth amendment of the Constitution, Bangladesh had extended the tenure of women Members of Parliament in reserved seats. One third of the seats had been reserved for women candidates in local body elections. For her pioneering role in empowering women, the Prime Minister had been honoured with the Global Women's Leadership Award 2018.

15. Bangladesh had enacted the Children Act 2013, updating the earlier Act, and also in 2013 had amended the Birth and Death Registration Act 2004. The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act had been adopted in 2013. A separate act had been passed in 2013 to address the needs of persons, including children, with mental disorder and autism. The Government had reserved a 1 per cent quota for disabled persons for first-class government jobs and a 10 per cent quota for third- and fourth-class government jobs.

16. The Labour Act 2006 had been amended in 2013, providing flexible procedures for trade union registration and occupational health and safety measures. All garment factories were now recognized as compliant. To promote safe, orderly and regular migration, Bangladesh had enacted the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act 2013.

17. The Government had adopted the National Social Security Strategy in 2015, ensuring the right to social security for unemployed persons, disabled persons, widows, orphans and elderly citizens. Bangladesh had also initiated a life cycle-based social security agenda, covering people of all age groups within the social security net equally and inclusively.

18. To ensure the safety and health of citizens, the Government had enacted the Food Safety Act 2013 and had also adopted the Food Safety Rules 2014. Under that Act, 64 pure food courts had been established.

19. At present, 97.9 per cent of the population benefited from improved drinking water coverage and 99 per cent of the population had been brought within the coverage of sanitation facilities.

20. Bangladesh had brought over 80 per cent of its people within the coverage of electricity facilities, and planned to ensure electricity for all by 2021.

21. Adult literacy had increased to 72.3 per cent in 2016, from 53.5 per cent in 2005. Government incentives, for example stipends, had resulted in a primary school enrolment rate of almost 100 per cent for girls.

22. To foster public health, Bangladesh had adopted, in 2016, its National Drug Policy. It had already formulated the National Adolescent Health Strategy 2017–2030.

23. Addressing global issues such as terrorism and violent extremism all over the world, Bangladesh had undertaken massive awareness programmes to prevent violent extremism and radicalization, engaging youth, women and community leaders.

24. To address the adverse impacts of climate change, at the initiative of the Prime Minister, a climate change trust fund worth $400 million had been established, with the country's own resources. Bangladesh had earmarked 6–7 per cent of its annual budget for adaptation projects. Bangladesh remained committed to fulfilling its obligations under the Paris Agreement, and called for international cooperation and assistance in addressing this challenge.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

25. During the interactive dialogue, 105 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

26. Sri Lanka stated that the opening of the borders to Rohingya refugees had been exemplary. It urged Bangladesh to implement its pledge to eliminate child labour by 2025.

27. The State of Palestine noted the efforts of Bangladesh to combat poverty and improve standards of living, and to promote women's rights, especially in work.

28. The Sudan recognized the efforts of Bangladesh in the field of human rights, and commended the country's cooperation with the Human Rights Council, despite challenges.

29. Sweden acknowledged the important role Bangladesh had played in the face of an overwhelming influx of Rohingya refugees deserving solidarity and support from the international community.

30. Switzerland called on Bangladesh to guarantee democratic, free and fair elections in 2018. It congratulated Bangladesh for hosting a large number of Rohingya refugees.

31. The Syrian Arab Republic applauded the efforts of Bangladesh to improve human rights, despite challenges and obstacles.

32. Thailand commended the amendments to different laws, and encouraged Bangladesh to continue working with Myanmar and international organizations to ensure voluntary repatriation of persons in Cox's Bazar.

33. Togo noted the decisions to strengthen the national human rights institution and the efforts made to address the challenges from the flow of Rohingya refugees.

34. Tunisia applauded efforts to improve human rights, including raising the marriage age, combating violence against women and combating human trafficking.

35. Turkey commended efforts to advance human rights, the cooperation with international human rights mechanisms, and the addressing by Bangladesh of the acute humanitarian situation from the influx of Rohingya refugees.

36. Turkmenistan noted reforms to the national system for the protection of human rights, and the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman. It commended poverty reduction efforts.

37. Ukraine commended legislative and policy initiatives to tackle human rights challenges. It urged taking further steps to ensure the human rights of Rohingya refugees.

38. The United Arab Emirates applauded the progress in economic and social rights and commended the legislation to protect the family and preserve its social value.

39. The United Kingdom expressed concerns about allegations of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. It called upon Bangladesh to address pressures on freedom of expression and of religion or belief.

40. The United States expressed concern about limitations on freedoms of association and expression targeting the opposition, and reports of human rights violations by the security forces, and urged holding genuine elections.

41. Uruguay welcomed the commitment to provide refuge to 800,000 Rohingya refugees, the replacement of the death penalty with other forms of punishment, and measures taken to prevent violence against women and children.

42. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela appreciated efforts to implement previous review recommendations, noted the national development programmes and housing projects, and asked about measures taken to empower women.

43. Viet Nam commended Bangladesh for its economic growth in 2017, and reducing poverty. It asked about the efforts made to combat climate change.

44. Yemen recognized the cooperation by Bangladesh with international partners to fulfil its human rights obligations, including legislative measures on torture, children and disabilities.

45. Zambia remained concerned that Bangladesh was lagging behind in fulfilling its international obligations and regarding cooperation with human rights mechanisms, and had not ratified a number of human rights instruments.

46. Zimbabwe noted the legislative, policy and administrative measures to promote and protect human rights, including the enactment of laws to protect children and persons with disabilities, and on food security.

47. Afghanistan acknowledged the various legislative and policy initiatives taken to strengthen national institutions. It noted the accommodation of about 1 million Rohingya refugees.

48. Algeria welcomed the adoption of measures to reinforce democratic practice and transparency in the management of public affairs. It welcomed measures adopted to combat corruption, and on Rohingya refugees.

49. Argentina commended the adoption of the seventh five-year plan, focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals. It noted measures taken to combat discrimination and violence against minorities and to address the Rohingya refugee crisis.

50. Australia urged protection of the rights of displaced Rohingya. It underscored the importance of free, fair and inclusive elections later in the year. It noted extrajudicial deaths and the imposition of the death penalty.

51. Austria commended the sheltering of Rohingya, and expressed worry about reports of attacks against religious minorities, journalists and human rights defenders. It noted the age of criminal responsibility remained at 9 years.

52. Azerbaijan commended the graduation of Bangladesh from the least developed country category. It asked how the refuge of 1 million Rohingya people in the Cox's Bazar district had affected the rights of the Bangladeshi people.

53. Bahrain commended the passing of the Ombudsman Act, demonstrating the priority given by Bangladesh to delivering consistency and fairness in applying the law. It welcomed the development of the National Social Security Strategy, as it included targets from the Sustainable Development Goals.

54. Barbados commended Bangladesh for legislative reforms, and recognized that improving its human rights situation was a continuous process and Bangladesh had much more work to do.

55. Belarus welcomed the comprehensive and systematic work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and congratulated Bangladesh on the progress in improving its population's well-being.

56. Belgium recognized positive steps in implementing previous review recommendations, and encouraged further strengthening of the protection of human rights, in line with international treaties.

57. Benin commended efforts to implement recommendations from the previous review. It noted the good cooperation that Bangladesh had with the international human rights mechanisms.

58. Bhutan welcomed achievements in meeting the criteria to graduate from the least developed country category, and encouraged Bangladesh to continue with its people-centred development agenda, with particular focus on vulnerable sections of society.

59. The Plurinational State of Bolivia noted progress in poverty reduction, and was interested in learning about the country's experience with progressive implementation of the right to social security.

60. Bosnia and Herzegovina encouraged Bangladesh to submit its outstanding periodic treaty body reports, while acknowledging the efforts it had made to improve the human rights situation.

61. Botswana applauded Bangladesh for accommodating about 1 million Rohingya refugees. It noted legislative measures undertaken in line with treaty obligations on children, torture, and disabilities.

62. The head of the delegation thanked all for extending humanitarian support for the Rohingya and made a request for the support needed to ensure their voluntary, dignified and safe return.

63. He emphasized that even without acceding to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, of 1951, and its Protocol, Bangladesh was doing more than countries that had signed those instruments, detailing support measures taken for the Rohingya. Responding to a question from Azerbaijan about the impact of the Rohingya crisis, he stated that currently in Cox's Bazar there were twice as many Rohingya as local residents. The influx had caused price hikes of basic goods in the area. The local people, unable to use their land for cultivation, lost out in the labour market to the Rohingya, who accepted lower wages. Municipal services had been unavailable to locals since the influx, adding more suffering. At the national level, resources had been diverted to deploy additional law enforcement officials in Cox's Bazar for the protection of the Rohingya, depriving other areas of the country.

64. Regarding law enforcement agencies and human rights, he underscored the zero-tolerance policy in cases of criminal liability of members of the law enforcement agencies, and gave the example of Narayanganj 7 murder case, in which the severest punishment had been meted out to convicted members of law enforcement agencies. The Government had an unequivocal, no-impunity stance regarding the involvement of law enforcement agencies in kidnapping or abduction.

65. He respectfully disagreed that enforced disappearances occurred in Bangladesh frequently. Often, cases of possible abduction of individuals were reported as enforced disappearances. He said that that was done with the obvious intention of maligning the Government and its achievements. In many cases, the perceived victims had reappeared, proving the allegations of the so-called enforced disappearance false.

66. The Government was vigilant to protect civil society and bloggers and thus create space for freedom of expression for all walks of life. It had instructed all police stations in Bangladesh to provide security for individuals. Since 2016, no new case had been found where such unfortunate killings had taken place or threats had been made.

67. The Information and Communication Technology Act had been enacted in 2006 to legalize electronic signatures. Following questions raised by the media, the Government had found the section incongruous and agreed to repeal section 57. To combat cybercrime and ensure cybersecurity, Bangladesh was in the process of enacting the Digital Security Act, and would ensure it did not affect freedom of speech and of expression.

68. In 2013, Bangladesh had amended the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929 and had raised the marriageable age to 18 for girls and 21 for boys. The special provision in the Act regarding special circumstances would be applied only with the consent of the court and the guardians of the persons involved. So far, there had been no case of misuse of the provision. The Government would remain vigilant on its proper implementation.

69. Regarding ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, he stated that Bangladesh would have to make a detailed analysis of the provisions of the Convention and of their implications on the existing legal system. Thereafter, a decision would be made about whether ratification of the Convention was necessary. The enactment of the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act 2013 had been testimony that Bangladesh accepted the recommendations of the second review cycle. Before ratifying the Optional Protocol allowing the complaint mechanism, Bangladesh would first need to address the gaps in the national legislation. The Government was planning to bring necessary amendments into the law, in consultation with concerned stakeholders.

70. Brazil commended the generosity in sheltering Rohingya and commended efforts to promote gender equality and reduce poverty. It encouraged Bangladesh to accede to the statelessness conventions and other important instruments.

71. Cambodia commended the amendment of human rights-related legislation, and achievements in economic and social development, and encouraged Bangladesh to provide resources to strengthen national institutions promoting human rights, democracy, good governance and the rule of law.

72. Canada welcomed efforts to host the Rohingya and called upon Bangladesh to implement the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).

73. Chile welcomed progress made in human rights, but expressed concerns about pending requests for visits from special rapporteurs and a working group.

74. China welcomed the country's efforts in socioeconomic development, poverty reduction, and the improvement of education and health-care services and social protection systems.

75. Côte d'Ivoire congratulated Bangladesh for its solidarity with Rohingya refugees, and encouraged further improvement of the situation of women, children and refugees.

76. Cuba welcomed the approval of new laws and asked what priority the Government had established for providing social security to vulnerable groups.

77. Czechia welcomed the constructive attitude in accepting a great number of Rohingya refugees, but noted serious persisting human rights challenges.

78. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea welcomed legislative and policy measures taken to improve human rights and efforts to develop the country.

79. Denmark expressed concerns about child marriage, and about the lack of human resources and office equipment and the absence of rules that impeded the work of the land commission.

80. Djibouti welcomed progress made on the rights of the child and of persons with disabilities, and the strengthening of the National Human Rights Commission.

81. Egypt asked about the legal measures adopted and social security strategy launched to protect the elderly, and welcomed the adoption of a programme to provide jobs and stable income for the poorest groups.

82. Estonia commended Bangladesh for its efforts in keeping its borders open and protecting refugees fleeing discrimination, persecution and violence in Myanmar.

83. Finland commended measures taken since the last review cycle to address violence against women and girls, but remained concerned over the high number of reports of such violence.

84. France commended the progress made on the right to food, health care and education, and the good reception given to the refugees from Myanmar.

85. Gabon welcomed efforts in managing natural disasters and guaranteeing the rights of vulnerable people, such as women, children, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

86. Georgia welcomed the country's efforts to combat trafficking and commended its efforts to receive Rohingya refugees with full respect for the international protection regime, despite not being a party to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

87. Germany expressed appreciation to Bangladesh for offering refuge to hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees.

88. Ghana commended efforts to protect human rights and noted particularly the strengthening of democratic institutions and accountability mechanisms.

89. Greece commended the generosity in hosting Rohingya refugees and the immense efforts made by Bangladesh in facing the Rohingya humanitarian crisis.

90. Guyana congratulated Bangladesh on the distinction of having women in the roles of Prime Minister, Speaker, and Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

91. Haiti congratulated Bangladesh on its continued efforts to protect the rights of large numbers of refugees fleeing discrimination and violence in the region.

92. The Holy See acknowledged efforts to promote and protect human rights, particularly of Rohingya refugees, and progress made in poverty reduction and in interfaith dialogue.

93. Honduras expressed appreciation for progress in implementing recommendations from the previous review and reiterated its support for the Government's efforts.

94. Iceland paid tribute to the Government's hospitality and compassion in providing humanitarian assistance to the Rohingya community.

95. India commended the progress achieved in relation to development, poverty reduction and food security, and praised measures for improving gender equality in accessing education, health care and employment.

96. Indonesia commended the strengthening of institutional and legal measures to protect women from violence. It welcomed the adoption of the Ombudsman Act and the addressing of trafficking.

97. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted that the unexpected influx of Rohingya refugees had hindered the progress made to protect human rights, which required attention from the international community.

98. Saudi Arabia commended human rights education efforts, including the training provided by the National Human Rights Commission to the law enforcement agencies, and incorporating human rights in the police academy curriculum.

99. Ireland commended Bangladesh on its protection of Rohingya refugees and its cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, while being concerned over legislation restricting freedom of expression and over reports of violence against human rights defenders.

100. Italy welcomed the commitment by Bangladesh to the review process, and particularly, efforts made to protect children's rights, and appreciated the intention to extend compulsory primary education.

101. Japan welcomed the adoption of the Judicial Service Discipline Rules, and efforts to promote capacity-building for judges and legal officials, and appreciated the decision to accommodate large numbers of refugees, and the continued dialogue with Myanmar.

102. Jordan commended the support provided by Bangladesh to the national institutions to promote human rights, and commended the legislative and administrative measures taken in that regard.

103. Kuwait welcomed the efforts made since the last review, mainly in cooperating with special procedures, enhancing the National Human Rights Commission, strengthening the Anti-Corruption Commission and adopting human rights laws.

104. The head of the delegation stated that Bangladesh was now studying two drafts of the Anti-Discrimination Act and would soon come up with an Act.

105. To make access to justice freer, Bangladesh was addressing capacity issues in the judiciary, including encouraging alternative dispute resolution.

106. He stated that there was no child labour in the ready-made garments sector and that Bangladesh was committed to eliminating child labour in all its forms by 2025, as enshrined in Sustainable Development Goal 8.7. Earlier, Bangladesh had reduced the membership threshold for setting up trade unions from 30 per cent to 20 per cent. The law had been amended to allow trade unions in export processing zones. Bangladesh had also acceded to the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).

107. The Lao People's Democratic Republic commended measures taken to implement human rights treaties at the national level, including the adoption of laws relating to torture, persons with disabilities, and children.

108. The Russian Federation welcomed steps to adopt laws on national food security, on children and on persons with disabilities, and effective steps to combat corruption.

109. Pakistan noted with appreciation the adoption of domestic violence prevention and protection rules and the enactment of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, and the efforts to eradicate poverty.

110. Libya appreciated efforts to implement universal periodic review recommendations and treaty obligations, including the adoption of laws on persons with disabilities, preventing torture, and children.

111. Madagascar expressed satisfaction with the "zero tolerance" policy towards all forms of violence against religious minorities and with the adoption of the social security strategy.

112. Malaysia commended steps taken to strengthen national institutions to promote democracy, good governance and the rule of law, and the compassionate response to the Rohingya crisis. It asked about steps taken to reduce the use of pretrial detention.

113. Maldives commended Bangladesh on the legislative measures protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, and restraining child marriage, and on biodiversity.

114. Mexico recognized the progress made since the previous cycle, particularly the efforts to house over 1 million Rohingya refugees.

115. Montenegro welcomed progress in combating discrimination, remained concerned about discrimination against women and children in marginalized situations, and urged the revealing of discriminatory laws and policies.

116. Morocco commended the efforts made for the Rohingya, and in strengthening institutional mechanisms and combating terrorism.

117. Namibia commended Bangladesh for taking administrative and legal measures to strengthen the Anti-Corruption Commission, and establishing an Ombudsman's office and a child rights commission.

118. Nepal appreciated efforts aimed at strengthening the national human rights institutions, promoting gender equality, and hosting a large number of refugees on humanitarian grounds.

119. The Netherlands welcomed steps to reform legal restrictions on freedom of expression, related to religious groups and minorities. It regretted the Government's reluctance to denounce attacks against human rights defenders and restrictive legislation.

120. New Zealand commended the response by Bangladesh to the Rohingya crisis and efforts made to promote workplace safety, and remained concerned at the use of the death penalty and reprisals.

121. Nigeria commended Bangladesh for cooperating with human rights mechanisms, and its adoption of laws on the rights of persons with disabilities, children, combating torture, terrorism and trafficking.

122. Norway noted the country's remarkable social and economic progress, including poverty reduction and girls' education.

123. Oman applauded Bangladesh for its commitment to the rule of law, equality and justice, and for hosting about 1 million Rohingya refugees, adding to its national development challenges.

124. Lebanon praised the management by Bangladesh of the sudden influx of large numbers of refugees, despite its limited resources, and commended its efforts to meet its international obligations, particularly in human rights education.

125. Peru recognized the Government's generous welcome to Rohingya refugees and encouraged it to continue providing the necessary support to that population.

126. The Philippines commended the enactment of the Overseas Employment and Migrant Act, and efforts in poverty eradication and in addressing the adverse impact of climate change.

127. Poland acknowledged efforts to improve the human rights situation of Rohingya refugees, to combat discrimination and corruption, to strengthen access to justice and to protect vulnerable groups.

128. Portugal welcomed positive steps taken since the previous review, such as the adoption of a national strategy on refugees from Myanmar and undocumented nationals of Myanmar.

129. Qatar noted the efforts of Bangladesh to promote human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, consolidate democracy and strengthen the judiciary and its independence.

130. The Republic of Korea applauded the commitment by Bangladesh to accepting refugees from Myanmar and cooperating with the United Nations to protect their rights, and noted adoption of the Domestic Violence Act.

131. Latvia noted positive measures taken by Bangladesh and encouraged it to make further efforts in fulfilling its human rights obligations.

132. Iraq appreciated efforts to implement recommendations of the previous review and to implement human rights treaty obligations at the national level through legislative and policy measures.

133. Senegal hailed measures to help vulnerable groups, the submission of reports to the treaty bodies and the hosting of displaced Rohingya despite resource challenges.

134. Serbia welcomed measures to strengthen the independence of the National Human Rights Commission and improve court capacity. It encouraged Bangladesh to enforce national legislation on child labour and invest in access to justice.

135. Singapore commended the prioritization of the protection of women, and the adoption of the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children, and was confident of the success of efforts to transform Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021.

136. Slovakia appreciated efforts to train journalists, expressing concern about cases of murder of journalists. It noted that disadvantaged children had limited educational opportunities.

137. Slovenia welcomed the work to ensure children's rights, particularly efforts to eradicate child marriage, and expressed concern about the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.

138. South Africa commended the Perspective Plan 2010–2021, the implementation of five-year plans and the strengthening of institutional mechanisms.

139. Spain noted efforts to promote and protect human rights, especially of minorities, to combat torture and to improve job security, and invited Bangladesh to approve the National Plan on Persons with Disabilities.

140. Tajikistan noted positively the enactment of numerous laws on children and persons with disabilities, and combating torture, for the promotion and protection of human rights.

141. Ecuador commended efforts to cope with the influx of refugees, and progress on the rights of children and persons with disabilities and on combating corruption.

142. The head of the delegation noted that Bangladesh had ratified the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Before entering into an Optional Protocol related to complaint mechanisms, Bangladesh would like to make existing national institutions stronger and more effective.

143. Regarding youth and employment, he noted that 1.4 million new jobs had been created since 2015. The Employment Generation Programme for the poorest provided a secure and regular source of income to over 700,000 people, more than 30 per cent of them women.

144. He noted that Bangladesh was a multiparty democracy and political parties enjoyed freedom of assembly and peaceful protest. He stated that it was unfortunate that, since 2014, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party had boycotted or disrupted election processes in ways condemned by many. The Government was committed to ensuring people's right to vote, at any cost. Elections would be held on time, in accordance with Constitutional provisions, under the independent Election Commission.

145. The Supreme Court had issued a directive to stop all forms of corporal punishment against children at educational institutions and the Government had issued a circular accordingly. The head of the delegation stressed that when considering the human rights situation of a country, we must not lose sight of its specific social, political, cultural, economic and demographic situation. Therefore, efforts needed to be aligned with the people's views, opinions and values, specifically on issues such as the death penalty or same-sex relations.

146. The head of delegation concluded by thanking all delegations, the troika members, the National Human Rights Commission and other stakeholders.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

147. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Bangladesh and enjoy the support of Bangladesh:**

147.1 **Continue constructive cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms (Tajikistan);**

147.2 **Continue its cooperation with the United Nations and its mechanisms to protect and promote human rights (Kuwait);**

147.3 **Continue to strengthen national mechanisms that strengthen the human rights situation (Sudan);**

147.4 **Incorporate provisions of international human rights instruments to which it is a party into its domestic legislation (Zimbabwe);**

147.5 **Make further efforts to strengthen existing national legislation to address discrepancies and to enact new legislation to implement international human rights instruments it is a party to (Bhutan);**

147.6 **Continue to bring its national legislation and policies fully in line with its international commitments (Barbados);**

147.7 **Bring legislation into conformity with the obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by repealing restrictive provisions that limit the rights of journalists, human rights defenders and civil society organizations to freedom of expression and free speech (Latvia);**

147.8 **Promptly implement the recommendations accepted in the second cycle of the universal periodic review, on extrajudicial executions, and enforced disappearances, and against torture (France);**

147.9 **Establish a plan of action to ensure full implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord (Australia);**

147.10 **Launch a road map with a clear timeline for the speedy, proper and full implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord (Denmark);**

147.11 **Continue efforts to implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord and ensure that the ethnic minorities fully enjoy their rights (Maldives);**

147.12 **Increase efforts to implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord (New Zealand);**

147.13 **Continue to implement the national social security strategy, prioritizing the situation of women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly (Belarus);**

147.14 **Provide a mechanism to follow up the full implementation of the Parental Maintenance Act of 2013 (United Arab Emirates);**

147.15 **Continue to strengthen human and financial resources of the National Human Rights Commission (Turkey);**

147.16 **Continue to implement measures aimed at strengthening the National Human Rights Commission (Zimbabwe);**

147.17 **Provide the National Human Rights Commission with the resources to fully implement its mission (France);**

147.18 **Provide adequate financial and technical resources to the National Human Rights Commission to enable it fulfil its mandate (Ghana);**

147.19 **Continue to strengthen the role of the National Human Rights Commission (Syrian Arab Republic);**

147.20 **Provide further support to the National Human Rights Commission to enable it to fulfil its mandate in the best manner and in line with the Paris Principles (Qatar);**

147.21 **Pursue the effective implementation of the Five-Year National Development Plan (Lebanon);**

147.22 **Ensure security forces abide by relevant national and international standards in countering criminal and extremist activity (Australia);**

147.23 **Ensure that police officers are adequately trained and instructed to investigate reports of harassment, attacks and death threats against journalists,**

media workers, human rights defenders and activists and ensure the protection of those under threat in accordance with international human rights law (Finland);

147.24 **Focus on training the women of Bangladesh, in particular policewomen, to increase the percentage of female blue helmets (Haiti);**

147.25 **Further accelerate the process of adoption of the anti-discrimination legislation (Georgia);**

147.26 **Expedite the formulation of the Elimination of Discrimination Act (Thailand);**

147.27 **That the anti-discrimination law be drafted to protect the rights of marginalized communities and that it be consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (South Africa);**

147.28 **Advance its policy of promoting a culture of peace, supporting collective measures against racism, xenophobia and hatred of Islam, and protecting the victims of these crimes (Oman);**

147.29 **Intensify efforts to ensure gender equality in the area of education (United Arab Emirates);**

147.30 **Establish a legislative framework to eliminate discrimination against marginalized and disadvantaged children (Madagascar);**

147.31 **Take specific measures aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination and stigma in health-care settings, in particular against those persons who are in a more vulnerable position, including in the context of mental health and of HIV/AIDS (Portugal);**

147.32 **Continue to promote a culture of peace and support anti-racism measures (Sudan);**

147.33 **Continue the efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and promote economic and social sustainable development in order to lay solid foundations for its people to enjoy all human rights (China);**

147.34 **Implement the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights and achieve that goal through continuing efforts with development partners and the international community to accelerate the implementation of those goals (Egypt);**

147.35 **Continue efforts and development plans to transform Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021 and into a developed country by 2041 (Syrian Arab Republic);**

147.36 **Continue to carry out inclusive public policies targeting vulnerable groups in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (Senegal);**

147.37 **Continue its efforts in addressing the negative impacts of climate change (Viet Nam);**

147.38 **Develop strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change (Gabon);**

147.39 **Continue efforts to combat terrorism and trafficking in persons (Syrian Arab Republic);**

147.40 **Continue efforts to combat terrorism, including addressing root causes, in full conformity with international norms (Saudi Arabia);**

147.41 **Continue efforts to combat violent extremism, notably through the studies of the root causes of this phenomenon (Morocco);**

147.42 **Sustain efforts in combating terrorism and drug trafficking (Nigeria);**

147.43 Enhance the promotion and protection of fundamental human rights in accordance with the level of socioeconomic development of the country in keeping with international human rights instruments (Tajikistan);

147.44 Redouble efforts and commitments in upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms (Nigeria);

147.45 Enact legislation clearly prohibiting corporal punishment (Zambia);

147.46 Formulate rules of procedures for the use of clause 22 of the 2017 Child Marriage Restraint Act to clarify existing gaps in order to prevent misuse of the provision allowing marriage for children below the legal age in "special circumstances" (Denmark);

147.47 Continue to strengthen its measures in preventing child marriages (Viet Nam);

147.48 Amend the Child Marriage Restraint Act to maintain the legal minimum age at 18 years (Republic of Korea);

147.49 Move towards the real and effective elimination of child marriage, restricting to the maximum the application of exceptions (Spain);

147.50 Step up measures to combat child prostitution and early marriage (Gabon);

147.51 Strengthen existing law and practice to guarantee effectively the rights of children, in particular by combating violence against children, child labour and forced marriages, and by improving access to education (Poland);

147.52 Establish a comprehensive national system for the protection of children to prevent and respond to violence against children, prohibit corporal punishment of children and implement awareness and education programmes in this area (Uruguay);

147.53 Put an end to the practices of early marriage and the payment of dowries by implementing laws prohibiting such practices (Belgium);

147.54 Promptly and thoroughly investigate all allegations of extrajudicial execution or enforced disappearance and bring those responsible to justice (Switzerland);

147.55 Explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings, including at home (Montenegro);

147.56 Consider revising the Penal Code and the Children Act in order to prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings and raising the minimum legal age for marriage to 18 years under all circumstances (Namibia);

147.57 Continue the efforts to enable tangible progress in combating trafficking in persons (Turkmenistan);

147.58 Continue efforts to eliminate human trafficking (Islamic Republic of Iran);

147.59 Continue paying attention to the issue of trafficking in human beings at the national and the international level (Belarus);

147.60 Take immediate steps to implement the Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Rules under the 2012 Act, and the National Plan of Action 2015–2017, as a means of addressing the high levels of trafficking (Botswana);

147.61 Continue efforts to combat trafficking in humans, particularly the exploitation of children, by stepping up measures against traffickers (Djibouti);

147.62 Enhance cooperation at all levels to address trafficking in persons, in particular women and girls (Guyana);

147.63 **Work with civil society to develop a road map to implement Human Rights Council resolution 16/18 on combating religious intolerance (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

147.64 **Continue working on enhancing religious freedom and prevention of extremism and violent extremism (Holy See);**

147.65 **Take effective measures to ensure that the press can work free from the oppression by instances of censorship, threats, physical assaults and killings (Slovakia);**

147.66 **Take prompt and effective measures to ensure that freedom of assembly and expression extends in practice — both online and offline — to all people, media, civil society and political parties, throughout the upcoming election campaign and beyond (Canada);**

147.67 **Protect freedom of expression in media, politics and religion, and work with civil society to address concerns regarding section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

147.68 **Review all existing and proposed legislation relating to freedom of expression, both online and offline, to ensure that it fully complies with the relevant international standards (Ireland);**

147.69 **Take effective measures to ensure freedom of expression and end all assaults on journalists and human rights defenders, as well as ensure that the proposed Digital Security Act is in line with international standards (Estonia);**

147.70 **Guarantee freedom of expression in the Digital Security Act (France);**

147.71 **Ensure democratic space for all political actors, including the implementation of domestic laws, without restrictions on the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly (Switzerland);**

147.72 **Continue to invest in information and communications technologies for its large youth population, with a view to ensuring a better standard of living (India);**

147.73 **Safeguard freedoms of political expression and association, without reprisals, censorship, intimidation or restrictive legal action, and that Bangladesh safeguard the independence of media (New Zealand);**

147.74 **Continue efforts to protect freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief for all citizens and residents, and to support civil society participation (Poland);**

147.75 **Publicly commit to ensuring that journalists, bloggers, human rights defenders and civil society organizations are able to carry out their activities without fear of surveillance, intimidation, harassment, arrest, prosecution or retribution (Austria);**

147.76 **Guarantee the security of human rights defenders (France);**

147.77 **Protect human rights defenders and journalists from harassment by combating impunity and ensuring the prompt and impartial investigation of all violations against human rights defenders (Netherlands);**

147.78 **Ensure that human rights defenders, journalists and civil society have a safe and enabling environment and can operate freely without fear of reprisals (Norway);**

147.79 **Ensure a free, fair and inclusive general election, with full participation of all parties, and increase efforts to strengthen democracy (Japan);**

147.80 **Ensure effective protection of the lives and security of human rights defenders and journalists against human rights violations, including enforced disappearance, torture and extrajudicial killings (Republic of Korea);**

147.81 **Continue its efforts to combat the stigmatization of people living with HIV/AIDS (Gabon);**

147.82 **Continue taking further steps for the strengthening of the judicial system (Tajikistan);**

147.83 **Ensure procedures of the International Crimes Tribunal meet fair trial standards in accordance with article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Greece);**

147.84 **Consider measures to accelerate trial process with a view to reducing pending cases and the number of pretrial detainees as well as safeguarding their basic rights (Malaysia);**

147.85 **Continue efforts to improve and speed up the processing of cases in the courts (Benin);**

147.86 **Ensure that investigations into cases of killings, abduction attempts, physical attacks and threats against human rights defenders are prompt, effective and impartial (Ireland);**

147.87 **Strengthen the National Legal Aid Services with the necessary financial, human and technical resources to enable effective representation of those in need (Guyana);**

147.88 **Continue its policy to improve the judicial system, the law enforcement bodies and to reduce levels of corruption and poverty (Russian Federation);**

147.89 **Investigate all cases of murder and violence against journalists and bloggers and bring the perpetrators to justice (Slovakia);**

147.90 **Strengthen measures for protecting the family in order to work for the best interest of the child (Egypt);**

147.91 **Use effective measures to eliminate and prevent violations of economic, social and cultural rights (Turkmenistan);**

147.92 **Continue to adopt positive measures to better protect the right to education, health, employment and other rights of its people (China);**

147.93 **Proceed with the development of the legislative structure by additional laws that aim at promoting and protecting human rights, especially in the field of education and health (Syrian Arab Republic);**

147.94 **Enact a law on patients and health-care service providers and mobilize the necessary means for its implementation (Algeria);**

147.95 **Continue efforts to improve health and education and to combat discrimination (Libya);**

147.96 **Step up efforts made to improve economic and social rights, notably through follow-up to the 2021 vision and the five-year plan (2016–2021) (Morocco);**

147.97 **Continue to guarantee the right to food for marginalized groups, and make efforts together with the international community on this (Cuba);**

147.98 **Continue consolidating the successful housing plans for all (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

147.99 **Ensure the implementation of the National Social Security Strategy, focusing specifically on delivering social security to the most vulnerable groups (Bahrain);**

147.100 **Continue increasing the successful social programmes, in the fight against poverty and social exclusion (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

147.101 **Continue efforts to reduce poverty among the most vulnerable populations (Algeria);**

147.102 **Continue in the programme of combating poverty through supporting microfinance programmes (Sudan);**

147.103 **Establish appropriate programmes to guarantee to Bangladeshis living in poverty access to economic growth in the country in a tangible and practical way (Haiti);**

147.104 **Step up efforts to implement poverty reduction measures (Philippines);**

147.105 **Step up its efforts to eliminate poverty and improve living standards (Qatar);**

147.106 **Continue to implement its strategies and plans and work to adopt a plan to ensure access to drinking water and sanitation services for poor neighbourhoods and rural areas (State of Palestine);**

147.107 **Continue promoting access to drinking water and sanitation, especially in rural areas (Plurinational State of Bolivia);**

147.108 **Promote greater access to safe and drinkable water and sanitation, especially in rural areas (Holy See);**

147.109 **Amend the Bangladesh Labour Act and Export Processing Zone Labour Act, in consultation with workers and employers, to ensure the provisions on freedom of association conform to international labour standards (United States of America);**

147.110 **Adopt further measures to guarantee workers' rights, also in line with the "Sustainability Compact" (Italy);**

147.111 **Continue efforts to strengthen labour inspection authorities to conduct assessments of the safety of workplaces (Jordan);**

147.112 **Take the necessary steps to hold companies accountable for practices with a negative impact on workers' health, well-being and safety (Ecuador);**

147.113 **Improve the working conditions of women by monitoring and punishing lawbreakers among employers (State of Palestine);**

147.114 **Take effective measures to protect workers' rights, including by reducing the existing gender wage gap and improving working conditions (Botswana);**

147.115 **Continue to implement national measures to address the wage gap between the two sexes (State of Palestine);**

147.116 **Reduce the wage gap between the two sexes and ensure women's access to the labour market (Iraq);**

147.117 **Continue efforts to significantly strengthen measures combating unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, in accordance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and relevant ILO conventions (New Zealand);**

147.118 **Strengthen existing follow-up mechanisms for the protection of women workers against all forms of exploitation, particularly those working in the informal sectors, and require businesses to answer for practices that are harmful to the health, well-being and safety of women workers (Côte d'Ivoire);**

147.119 **Strengthen efforts to protect female workers from exploitation (Guyana);**

147.120 **Strengthen existing monitoring mechanisms to protect female workers from all forms of exploitation, particularly those working in the informal sector (Ghana);**

147.121 **Strengthen the existing national monitoring mechanisms aimed at protection of women workers from all kinds of discrimination, in particular those working in informal sector (Serbia);**

147.122 **Make further effort to improve health infrastructures particularly in rural areas and intensify training programmes for health professionals (Democratic People's Republic of Korea);**

147.123 **Increase access to basic health care, particularly in rural areas, with the aim of reducing and preventing maternal, fetal and infant mortality (Holy See);**

147.124 **Continue promoting access to health services, facilitating greater access to mental health, maternal health and neonatal health care (Plurinational State of Bolivia);**

147.125 **Treat the right to education similarly to other rights in the Constitution (Guyana);**

147.126 **Strengthen national measures and international cooperation to achieve the goal of education for all (Belarus);**

147.127 **Continue measures to broaden the educational system, including the enshrining of the right to free and compulsory education (Peru);**

147.128 **Continue to invest in quality education for creating a knowledge-based society to ensure equality, justice and peace (Turkey);**

147.129 **Extend compulsory primary school and make efforts to increase the school participation rate of the marginalized groups (Slovakia);**

147.130 **Continue efforts to improve the quality of education in public schools, towards the realization of the right to development (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

147.131 **Ensure a continued focus on girls' education throughout the country especially for poor and marginalized children and youth and ensure that they all complete their education (Afghanistan);**

147.132 **Invest in quality education, and make use of information and communication technology to create employment opportunities for its youth population (Azerbaijan);**

147.133 **Continue its efforts at increasing the number of children, particularly girls, enrolled in free and compulsory primary education, and hopes that free and compulsory education is extended to all secondary school-age children irrespective of gender or ethnicity (Barbados);**

147.134 **Continue its efforts to ensure full enrolment of children, particularly girls, in schools and to provide quality education (Democratic People's Republic of Korea);**

147.135 **Intensify efforts to improve the education system and ensure equal access to quality education for all, particularly for women and girls (Djibouti);**

147.136 **Implement policies to increase the enrolment ratio of girls in primary and secondary schools to give them a good start in life (Singapore);**

147.137 **Further enhance its efforts to achieve higher enrolment ratios of girls in primary and secondary schools (Thailand);**

147.138 **Continue efforts to develop practical measures to implement the Informal Education Act of 2014 (Tunisia);**

147.139 **Take additional measures, in consultation with civil society, to strengthen progressive social reforms, in particular to empower women and girls, and to combat religious extremism (Haiti);**

147.140 **Continue assistance and promotion on women's empowerment in all sectors (Lao People's Democratic Republic);**

147.141 **Continue to prevent violence against women, in accordance with the National Action Plan (2013–2025), with regular monitoring (Sri Lanka);**

147.142 **Combat violence against women and children and take action for their rights (France);**

147.143 **Continue efforts to combat discrimination and violence against women (Tunisia);**

147.144 **Intensify its efforts towards combating violence against women (Georgia);**

147.145 **Strengthen existing monitoring mechanisms to protect women and children from all forms of violence and exploitation (Nepal);**

147.146 **Continue to tackle sexual violence against women to ensure protection of women's rights (Lao People's Democratic Republic);**

147.147 **Take concrete measures to prevent and to protect women from domestic violence, ensure effective access to legal recourse and hold perpetrators to account (Norway);**

147.148 **Ensure sufficient resources are allocated to fully implement all major components of the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children (Singapore);**

147.149 **Ensure the registration of children in order to protect them from abuses, exploitation, abandonment and human rights violations (Holy See);**

147.150 **Take strong measures to eradicate child labour, and violence and crimes against children (Chile);**

147.151 **Adopt legislation and comprehensive public policies to guarantee the human rights of persons in a situation of human mobility, with a gender, intergenerational and intercultural focus (Ecuador);**

147.152 **Continue to advance the rights of persons with disabilities, including by ensuring that public places are friendly to persons with disabilities (Islamic Republic of Iran);**

147.153 **Facilitate the access to education, health care and public services for persons with disabilities (Lao People's Democratic Republic);**

147.154 **Consider the possibility of developing a national plan or national framework for protecting the rights of persons with special needs (Lebanon);**

147.155 **Continue implementing the legal, policy and administrative measures to protect the rights of ethnic minorities (South Africa);**

147.156 **Ensure the effective investigation and sanctioning of all cases of violence against religious minorities (Austria);**

147.157 **Guarantee the protection and rights of persons belonging to minorities (France);**

147.158 **Continue its proactive role in dealing with international migrations (Indonesia);**

147.159 **Enhance intergovernmental dialogue and cooperation to protect and promote the rights of migrant workers (Nepal);**

147.160 **Strengthen measures to protect migrant workers (Peru);**

147.161 **Continue efforts to enhance the transparency and efficiency of the recruitment system of migrant workers from Bangladesh (Philippines);**

147.162 **Work closely with bilateral and regional partners in lowering the cost of migration for migrant workers from Bangladesh (Philippines);**

147.163 **Improve the conditions of migrant workers, in accordance with international conventions and treaties (Iraq);**

147.164 **Continue efforts to host the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals until they voluntarily return to their homeland in safety, security and dignity (Yemen);**

147.165 **Continue to pursue strong efforts bilaterally as well as internationally and with help and assistance from the international community, for the sustainable resolution of the Rohingya crisis (Azerbaijan);**

147.166 **Continue to work with international partners and Myanmar to find a sustainable solution that enables those displaced to return home voluntarily, safely and with dignity (New Zealand);**

147.167 **Continue to hold constructive dialogue with Myanmar and make efforts to implement the bilateral agreement, aiming at steady and rapid repatriation of refugees (Japan).**

148. **The following recommendations will be examined by Bangladesh, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the thirty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council:**

148.1 **Ratify the main international human rights instruments (Zambia);**

148.2 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Madagascar);**

148.3 **Enforce constitutional provisions safeguarding freedom of expression, including by amending section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act and relevant provisions of the draft Digital Security Act (Australia);**

148.4 **Ensure legal and constitutional protection of indigenous and religious minorities, and facilitate the reporting of violations of their rights (Estonia);**

148.5 **Fully comply with the Paris Principles and increase the institutional capacity and financial and human resources of the National Human Rights Commission (Chile);**

148.6 **Continue its efforts in strengthening the capacity of its national human rights institution, namely the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh, and of the newly established Ombudsman (Indonesia);**

148.7 **Amend the Marriage Act and maintain a minimum legal age of marriage at 18 without exceptions (Zambia);**

148.8 **Eliminate child, early and forced marriage, including by reforming the Child Marriage Restraint Act to remove the exception for child marriage in "special cases", as this term is open to abuse (Canada);**

148.9 **Eliminate early marriages and ensure education on sexual and reproductive health and rights for adolescents (Estonia);**

148.10 **Step up the efforts to prevent child, early and forced marriages, particularly in rural areas and slums, and to amend the Child Marriage Restraint Act by introducing a minimum legal age of marriage of 18 without any exceptions (Slovenia);**

148.11 **Take action against child, early and forced marriages with or between children by reformulating the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 2017 to**

clarify the gaps in the legislation and to prevent misuse of the "special circumstances" clause (Sweden);

148.12 **Enhance efforts to prevent cases of torture and enforced disappearance and to prosecute perpetrators (Italy);**

148.13 **Review and amend the laws that restrict freedom of expression, such as section 57 of the 2006 Information and Communication Technology Act (Mexico);**

148.14 **Review and redraft the proposed Digital Security Act to ensure online freedom of expression (Norway);**

148.15 **Redraft the Digital Security Act in line with international norms and standards for freedom of expression (Sweden);**

148.16 **Thoroughly investigate extrajudicial killings, abductions and forced disappearances taking place within law enforcement agencies, while also ensuring that the perpetrators are brought to justice (Sweden);**

148.17 **Investigate all allegations of human rights violations by the police and security forces and take legal steps so that those responsible for enforced disappearances, custodial torture and extrajudicial killings are held accountable (Norway);**

148.18 **Increase labour inspections and take action against individuals and organizations that subject migrant workers to forced labour and human trafficking (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

148.19 **Continue increasing efforts to combat all types of violence against women and girls, and eradicate discriminatory practices and measures against them, guaranteeing the full exercise of their rights, including those related to sexual and reproductive health (Uruguay);**

148.20 **Combat gender stereotypes and protect women from all forms of abuse and harm, including gender-based violence and marital rape, and address the persistent gender wage gap, among others (Namibia);**

148.21 **Raise the minimum age for criminal responsibility for juvenile offenders in line with recommendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Austria);**

148.22 **Continue improving Rohingya refugees' conditions and investigating allegations of abuses and human rights violations against them in accordance with international standards (Holy See);**

148.23 **Step up efforts to guarantee the rights of refugees, with full respect of the principle of non-refoulement (Mexico);**

148.24 **Strengthen those measures that have been taken to ensure that all children and young persons among the refugees have effective access to the right to education, and guarantee the registration of all refugee children born in Bangladesh regardless of race, religion, national origin or the citizenship of their parents, particularly children of Bangladeshi and Rohingya couples (Argentina).**

149. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below did not enjoy the support of Bangladesh and would thus be noted:**

149.1 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Spain);**

149.2 **Accede to the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Iceland);**

149.3 **Consider ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Uruguay);**

149.4 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Montenegro) (Iceland) (Togo) (Spain);**

149.5 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Japan) (Bosnia and Herzegovina) (Iraq) (Senegal) (Togo) (Ukraine); / Consider ratifying the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Peru);**

149.6 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance without reservations before the next universal periodic review (Greece);**

149.7 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Bosnia and Herzegovina) (Ukraine);**

149.8 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Denmark);**

149.9 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Poland);**

149.10 **Consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment at the earliest convenience (Ghana);**

149.11 **Take steps to accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Sri Lanka);**

149.12 **Ratify the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) for the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and the members of their families (Madagascar);**

149.13 **Ratify the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974 (No. 139) for the elimination of child labour (Spain);**

149.14 **Accede to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees in order to better assist and protect these persons in distress (Côte d'Ivoire);**

149.15 **Consider becoming a party to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, of 1951 (Georgia);**

149.16 **Become a party to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, of 1951 (New Zealand);**

149.17 **Ratify the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, of 1951, and ensure the short- and long-term conditions for the dignified, safe and voluntary return of displaced persons to their place of origin (Switzerland);**

149.18 **Remove the reservations to article 2 and article 16 (1) (c) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Latvia);**

149.19 **Issue and implement a standing invitation to all special procedures (Czechia);**

149.20 **Respond positively to pending visit requests by special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council and consider extending a standing invitation to all mandate holders (Latvia);**

149.21 **Enhance its fight against impunity and torture including by ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel,**

Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and establishing a national preventive mechanism accordingly (Czechia);

149.22 **Provide human, technical and financial resources to the National Human Rights Commission so it can fulfil its mandate and grant it a new mandate to investigate human rights violations (Honduras);**

149.23 **Expand the mandate of the National Human Rights Commission to investigate all human rights violations, including those involving State security actors, and provide it with adequate resources, in order to fulfil its mandate (Namibia);**

149.24 **Adopt, without delay, new non-discrimination legislation with a view to promoting gender equality, and, without discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion or any other status, criminalize all forms of violence against women and girls, including marital rape, irrespective of the age of the victim, domestic violence and all forms of sexual abuse and harassment, ensuring also security and justice to the victims (Finland);**

149.25 **Take measures to fight violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Brazil);**

149.26 **Take effective steps to include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in human rights legislation, recognizing the many dangers and challenges faced by the community, including the *hijra* (Canada);**

149.27 **Establish effective protection against discrimination, harassment and violence against sexual minorities (Norway);**

149.28 **Acknowledge the existence of sexual and gender minorities in the country, and furthermore abolish section 377 of the Criminal Code and thus decriminalize consensual sexual acts between same-sex couples (Slovenia);**

149.29 **Repeal section 377 of the Criminal Code and include sexual orientation and gender identity as a protected category in the new anti-discrimination law (Chile);**

149.30 **Protect and promote the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons through a broad legal framework, that includes the revision of laws that may be discriminatory, such as section 377 of the Penal Code (Mexico);**

149.31 **Take the necessary measures to repeal in its legislation the criminalization of consensual sexual acts between people of the same sex (Argentina);**

149.32 **Decriminalize in the Criminal Code relations between same-sex adults (Honduras);**

149.33 **Ensure that threats and violence against human rights defenders, and in particular women defenders and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex defenders, because of their work or perceived or actual gender identity, are effectively prosecuted and do not go unpunished (Belgium);**

149.34 **Review the special provision of the Child Marriage Restrain Act 2017 and implement legislation that effectively criminalizes all forms of gender-based violence (Germany);**

149.35 **Criminalize marital rape in all circumstances, and provide for the protection and psychological, mental and physical rehabilitation of victims (Portugal);**

149.36 **Abolition of the death penalty (Benin) (Portugal) (Czechia);**

149.37 **Adopt the legislation abolishing the death penalty and establish a moratorium on all pending executions (Slovakia);**

149.38 Reduce the number of crimes to which the death penalty applies, as a step towards eventual abolition of the death penalty (Australia);

149.39 Enact a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, with a view to abolishing it (Holy See);

149.40 Introduce a moratorium as a first step towards final abolition of the death penalty (Austria);

149.41 Establish a moratorium on executions as a first step towards the abolition of the death penalty (Belgium);

149.42 Establish a moratorium on the death penalty, as a first step towards complete abolition of this practice (Italy); / Take steps towards the full abolition of the death penalty (New Zealand); / Consider the imposition of a moratorium on the death penalty (Poland);

149.43 Establish a moratorium on the death penalty with a view to its abolition (Chile);

149.44 Continue the process of edging out the death penalty with a view to totally abolishing it (Namibia);

149.45 Decriminalize defamation and include it in the Civil Code in accordance with international standards, and take steps to create an independent broadcast licensing authority (Estonia);

149.46 Revise media laws, in consultation with civil society, to decriminalize "defamation" and "hurting religious sentiment", and limit proposed extended jail terms for these offences (United States of America);

149.47 Expand its democratic space online and offline in which opposition politicians, journalists, human rights defenders and other civil society members can operate freely and without fear for their lives, and to this end revise section 57 of the Information and Communication Technology Act and amend the Foreign Donation Regulations Act (Czechia);

149.48 Ensure that human rights activists and journalists can exercise their rights without fear, intimidation and harassment by redrafting the planned Digital Security Act, and repealing or amending all laws that violate the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, including the provisions of the Penal Code related to defamation and sedition, the Information and Communication Technology Act (in particular section 57), and the Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Act, in line with international human rights law (Germany);

149.49 Repeal the Information and Communication Technology Act (2006), as amended in 2013, or modify the Information and Communication Technology Act to bring it in line with international law and standards (Greece);

149.50 Repeal all laws and policies that restrict the activities and rights of its citizens and civil society organizations, including the Information and Communication Technology Act of 2006 and the Foreign Donations Regulation Act of 2016 (Netherlands);

149.51 Ensure that all refugee and stateless women and girls have effective access to justice without being threatened with arrest, by amending the 1946 Foreigners Act (Iceland);

149.52 Strengthen measures to prevent, investigate, and hold security forces accountable for human rights violations and abuses, including providing an update on investigations into the alleged disappearances of Mir Ahmed Bin Quasem and Amaan Azmi (United States of America);

149.53 End impunity by conducting thorough investigations and criminal prosecutions of human rights violations and abuses against human rights

defenders, journalists, bloggers, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Germany);

149.54 **Adopt legislative and political measures to ensure that women and young people have access to sex education and free use of friendly reproductive health services, particularly in rural areas and for persons on low incomes (Honduras);**

149.55 **Take further steps to fight all forms of violence and discrimination, in particular against women, children, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Italy);**

149.56 **Adopt legislation criminalizing all forms of violence against women and girls, including marital rape (Iceland);**

149.57 **Comprehensively review the legislation in order to recognize gender equality and the protection of indigenous people and ethnic minorities (Honduras);**

149.58 **Strengthen policies and measures to protect indigenous peoples (Islamic Republic of Iran);**

149.59 **Step up efforts in order for indigenous peoples, especially the Jumma and the Dalit, to fully enjoy their human rights (Peru);**

149.60 **Ensure access to justice to refugees and stateless individuals, in particular women and girls, including those belonging to ethnic minorities (Brazil).**

150. **All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Bangladesh was headed by Hon'ble Law Minister, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, H.E. Mr. Anisul Huq, MP and composed of the following members:

- H.E. Mr. Md. Shahriar Alam, MP. Hon'ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Mohammad Shahidul Haque, Senior Secretary, Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs;
- H.E. Mr. Md. Shahidul Haque, Foreign Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- H.E. Mr. M. Shameem Ahsan, Ambassador & Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN Office and other International Organizations, Geneva;
- Dr. Md. Shamsul Arefin, Secretary, Anti-Corruption Commission;
- Mr. Khondaker Mostan Hossain, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs;
- Ms. Nasreen Afroz, Director General (Joint Secretary), Prime Minister's Office;
- Mr. Md. Mizan-Ul-Alam, Joint Secretary (Press), Ministry of Information;
- Mr. Md. Abdul Karim, ndc, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs;
- Mr. Mostofa Faruque, Director General, Bangladesh Election Commission;
- Ms. Sadia Faizunnesa, Director General (United Nations), Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Md. Fakhrul Ahsan, Armed Forces Division;
- Mr. Md. Rezaul Karim, Additional Deputy Inspector General, Special Crime Management, Police HQ, Bangladesh Police;
- Representative; Public Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs;
- Representative, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education;
- Mr. Toufiq Islam Shatil, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN Office and other, International Organizations, Geneva;
- Ms. Farzana Mamtaz, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare;
- Mr. Md. Waliur Rahman, Director (State Minister's Office) Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Md. Emdadul Islam Chowdhury, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN Office and other International Organizations, Geneva;
- Ms. Mosammat Shahanara Monica, Director (United Nations), Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Mr. Md. Masum, Private Secretary to Law Minister, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs;
- Mr. Md. Robiul Islam, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN Office and other, International Organizations, Geneva;
- Ms. Tahleel Dilawar Moon, Senior Assistant Secretary (United Nations), Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

- Mr. Md. Abdul Wadud Akanda, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN Office and other, International Organizations, Geneva;
- Advocate Rana Das Gupta, General Secretary, Bangladesh Hindu Bouddha Christian Oikya Parishad;
- Advocate Kawser Ahmed, Consultant;
- Barrister Shah Ali Farhad, Senior Analyst, Centre for Research and Information;
- Mr. Md. Showeb Abdullah, Assistant Secretary (United Nations), Ministry of Foreign Affairs.